

# How to Protect European Values: Assessing European Responses to Recent Reforms in Poland

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Maximilian Steinbeis

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On 13 January 2016, the European Commission announced its decision to further investigate whether the recent reforms of Poland's Constitutional Tribunal and Public Service Broadcasters are consistent with the rule of law, a common value of the EU. The Rule of Law Framework, also meant to protect democracy and human rights, does not foresee binding measures or sanctions. Now activated for the first time, it rather provides for a structured dialogue between the Commission and the Member State. But is a visible, yet confidential dialogue bound to produce positive results? How is the Commission to operate the Framework in a cooperative, non-adversarial way? Shortly before, the Foreign Minister of Poland requested the opinion of the Council of Europe's Venice Commission on the reforms of the Constitutional Tribunal. On 11 March 2016 the Venice Commission has adopted its [opinion](#).

Tonight at 7 p.m., four high-ranking experts will discuss the opinion of the Venice Commission and the new mechanism as an instrument to protect European constitutional values in a transnational legal space which is rife with constitutional crises, but short of instruments to address them. Aiming to contribute to an open public debate across Europe, the forum will be [broadcasted live on Verfassungsblog](#).

Online viewers are encouraged to contribute questions and remarks via Facebook, Twitter or as comments to this blog post. Please use the hash tag #EURPOL. A selection of these online contributions will be introduced live into the discussion on the stage.

## **Discussion participants:**

**Dr. Adam Bodnar**, Commissioner for Human Rights, Warsaw

**Prof. Dr. Armin von Bogdandy**, Director at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Heidelberg

**Prof. Dr. Dr. Christoph Grabenwarter**, Vice-President of the Venice Commission "Democracy through Law", Judge at the Austrian Constitutional Court, Strasbourg/Vienna

**Prof. Dr. Renáta Uitz**, Department of Legal Studies, Central European University, Budapest (her input [here](#))

## **Moderator:**

